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Province of British Columbia

The Community Skills Centre (CSC)Strategic Initiative

Follow-up Survey Project

Summary Report

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Prepared by

Policy, Evaluation and Analysis Branch
Ministry of Education

for the

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The research for this project completed in October 1998 and serves as a follow-up survey to the Community Skills Centre Baseline Survey.

The CSC Evaluation Committee would like to thank the time and contribution of the many survey participants, staff from local Community Skill Centres, and representatives from both levels of governments. This project has been a long and complex process, and could not have been accomplished without the good will and assistance of such.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Background

Community Skills Centres (CSCs) were established in January of 1995 as a joint federal/provincial Strategic Initiative (SI). The goal of the CSC/SI is to reduce the impact of labour market adjustment and unemployment in communities through the enhancement of existing local programs and services, and through the use of technology. In essence, the CSC/SI objectives aim to add value to community educational opportunities by:

- providing innovative, flexible delivery of needed courses and programs;
- using technology as a tool to enhance access to education and training resources not currently available in the community and to promote propagation of technology in the community;
- being a focal point for bringing community resources together to reduce duplication of programs and services, to enhance the quality of training programs through partnerships and to promote new training opportunities leading to skills upgrading, improved employability skills or self-development.

Project Purpose and Approach

In September, 1998, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) commissioned R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. to undertake the *Community Skills Centre (CSC) Follow-up Survey* project. The purpose of the project was to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of the B.C. Community Skills Centre Strategic Initiative in facilitating labour market adjustment in selected communities through the completion of a follow-up telephone survey of CSC training program participants and a comparison sample of non-CSC users.[1]

As part of the overall assessment of the effectiveness of the Centres, the *Community Skills Centre (CSC) Follow-up Survey* represented the second of two projects to identify the impact of the CSC/SI from a program participant perspective. The first project, the *Community Skills Centre Baseline Survey* project, consisted of the collection of information from a sample of CSC training participants (to determine participant status prior to participation in a CSC program) as well as from a representative comparison population.[2] The purpose of the baseline survey project was to provide a "snapshot" or profile of all CSC training participants, CSC target participants and comparison respondents with respect to

[1] As a result of the many programs and services offered by CSCs across the province, there are a variety of different CSC "client groups". For example, many clients access CSCs on a drop-in basis or only utilize services, while other clients participate in training programs. This research focussed only on the "training program" client group and as such, should not be considered reflective of all CSC clients. Readers are directed to Section 2.3.1 of this report for further details regarding the definition of a CSC training program participant for the purposes of this study.

[2] The comparison sample consisted of individuals receiving income assistance or employment insurance who had not participated in a CSC training program.

attitudes about their employment prospects, training outcomes, and labour force participation as of the period from October, 1997 to February, 1998.

The second project involved the completion of a follow-up survey–which took place in October, 1998–of all respondents contacted as part of the baseline survey. The purpose of the follow-up survey was to establish the employment and training status of respondents as of October, 1998 and to gather further information with respect to satisfaction with training received and the extent to which their training helped them to achieve their employment and training goals. The information gathered through the follow-up survey has been used in conjunction with the results from the baseline survey to help identify changes in outcomes for the following groups:

- all CSC training participants;
- the CSC target group[3] relative to the comparison population.

In this respect, the final results of the *Community Skills Centre Follow-up Survey* project help to provide an overall assessment of the incremental impact of participation in a CSC Program from a participant perspective.

Key Findings

Program participants are generally satisfied with the CSC and report various program benefits.

Overall, Community Skills Centres are perceived by program participants to be valuable in helping them to achieve their training needs and goals and effective in helping them to improve or change their education and/or employment situations. For example, among participants who indicated they had a goal for taking their CSC training program, approximately eight in ten indicated that their training goal had been met. Further, just over four in ten CSC training participants felt that their employment situation had improved since they took their CSC training and the vast majority (75.5%) of those respondents felt that their CSC training had been important in this respect.

Most program participants interviewed had not utilized the CSC for services other than their training program. Among those who had, however, virtually all reported that these services had been valuable to them.

A notable proportion of CSC training participants have continued on with their education and training activities, suggesting that CSC programs may be valuable stepping stones for participants in pursuing additional education and training.

Approximately one-third of all CSC training participants have been involved in further education and training activities since taking their CSC training program. Of those who had taken additional training since their CSC program, 69.2% felt their CSC training was important in leading them to take further training.

[3] The CSC target group includes CSC training program participants who identified their primary source of income as either income assistance or employment insurance.

Analysis of these results suggests that CSC programs may be valuable stepping stones for participants in pursuing additional education and training.

Overall, CSC training participants have realized increases in their employability.

Analysis of CSC participant outcomes reveals that CSC participants have realized various positive employment outcomes since their participation in a CSC program. For example, the proportion of CSC training participants who were employed increased by 23.1% from the baseline to the follow-up point in time, from just over one-half (52.4%) to almost two-thirds (64.5%). Average annual employment incomes, as well as the proportion of CSC participants employed in permanent and full-time positions also increased from the baseline to the follow-up points in time.

With respect to CSC training participants who were relying on IA/EI at the time they took their training (e.g., the CSC target group), over half (52.7%) were employed at the time of the follow-up interview, up from 25.0% at the baseline point in time.

Participants from computer training program areas have realized particularly high found-work rates.

While a higher proportion of CSC participants from virtually all program areas were employed at the time of the follow-up survey as compared to the baseline point in time, the most striking increase in found-work rate was seen among program participants who had taken advanced computer training. At the follow-up point in time, three quarters (74.6%) of these participants were employed, up from only 34.1% at the baseline point in time. Those who had taken a basic computer training program also realized significant increases in employment (53.9% employed at the baseline point in time to 71.9% at the follow-up point in time). Given that one of the objectives of Community Skills Centres includes the use of information technology to increase competitiveness of business and industry in the global marketplace, these findings suggest that CSCs are working to meet this objective.

CSC target respondents were significantly more likely than comparison respondents to be involved in education and training activities since the completion of the baseline survey.

Over one-third (34.9%) of CSC target respondents have been involved in further education or training. This proportion was significantly higher than that for the IA/EI comparison group, of whom only 20.4% indicated being involved in education or training activities in 1998.

The CSC target group realized a substantially greater reduction in their unemployment rate than did comparison respondents.

Analysis of the change in unemployment rates (respondents who were not working and actively looking for work) among CSC target and comparison respondents from the baseline to the follow-up point in time revealed that the CSC target group realized a substantially greater reduction in their unemployment rate than did the comparison group. For example, from the baseline to the follow-up point in time, the proportion of CSC target respondents

who were unemployed fell from 55.2% to 23.7%, representing a relative decrease of 57.1%. The comparison group, by contrast, realized a relative decrease of only 23.8% in their unemployment rate.

CSC target (IA/EI) respondents are securing employment in a wider variety of occupational and industry sectors than are comparison respondents.

Results indicated that most employed respondents from the IA/EI comparison group who were employed at the time of the follow-up interview were working in occupations specific to transport, manufacturing or primary industry (50.7%). By contrast, only one-quarter (24.7%) of the CSC target group was working in these types of occupations. In general, CSC target group respondents were most likely to be working in sales and service occupations (32.6%), or in finance, business and administrative occupations (27.0%). Analysis of the major industries worked in by target and comparison respondents revealed a similar pattern. These findings suggest that CSC programs may be effective in helping IA/EI recipients prepare for jobs in tertiary occupations and industries.

In as much as CSC target participants appear to be establishing positive trends in terms of their employability outcomes relative to comparison respondents, a longer-term assessment of outcomes may be worthwhile to more concretely determine the relative effectiveness of the CSC/SI for IA/EI clients.

For the purposes of this study, improvement in employability for IA/EI recipients was assessed according to various measures including found-work rates, employment income, further education and training, and reduced dependency on IA/EI. Overall, the findings suggest that, although their employment and IA/EI outcomes are similar, CSC target participants have realized more positive tendencies or trends in their employability relative to comparison respondents.

On one hand, for example, results indicate that the overall proportion of CSC target and IA/EI comparison respondents currently employed is similar, as is the proportion who are relying on IA/EI as their primary source of income. As well, results of multivariate analysis suggest that there is little to no significant linear association between CSC participation and reduced dependency on IA/EI or found work as of the follow-up point in time. Employment incomes of CSC target respondents were also found to be considerably lower than the employment earnings of comparison respondents. In this respect, these results point to the possibility that there may be little incremental impact of CSC participation on employment or reduced dependency on IA/EI.

On the other hand, however, the CSC target group has realized a substantially higher increase in their found-work rate relative to the comparison group. For example, over half (52.7%) of CSC target respondents were employed at the time of the follow-up interview, up from 25.0% at the baseline point in time (comparison respondents realized a 33.3% relative increase in found-work rate, from 37.5% employed at the baseline survey to 50.0% employed at the follow-up point in time).

As well, CSC target respondents are considerably more likely than comparison respondents to have been involved in education or training since the baseline point in time. In keeping

with this, results of multivariate analyses suggests that there is a significant linear association between participation in a CSC and the pursuit of further education and training activities, indicating that the CSC/SI may be a positive intervention in this respect.

Other positive findings relating to the employability of the CSC target group relative to the comparison group include the following: i) among those CSC target and comparison respondents not employed at the time of the follow-up survey, target respondents were considerably more likely than comparison respondents to report that their main reason for not being employed was because they were involved in education and/or training activities (CSC target, 20.0%; comparison, 7.9%); ii) as mentioned above, the CSC target group has realized a substantially higher reduction in their unemployment rate relative to the comparison group.

Given that CSC target respondents have been more likely than comparison respondents to be continuing on with education and training activities, and appear to be branching out into more tertiary occupational and industry sectors (e.g., sales and service, business and administration, etc.), their employment levels and wages should continue to increase in subsequent years.

In this respect, analysis of administrative records and additional "outcomes" research would be beneficial in order to determine the extent to which the positive trends (such as increases in found-work rates, benefits of continued education and training, movement into tertiary industries and occupations, etc.) characteristic of the CSC target group relative to the comparison group continue over time and ultimately improve employment status, employment incomes and reduced reliance on IA/EI. In other words, a longer-term evaluation framework may be necessary in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the overall incremental impact of CSC participation in terms of changes in various employability measures and employment outcomes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Community Skills Centre Strategic Initiative

Community Skills Centres (CSCs) were established in January of 1995 as a joint federal/provincial Strategic Initiative (SI). The goal of the CSC/SI is to reduce the impact of labour market adjustment and unemployment in communities through the enhancement of existing local programs and services, and through the use of technology.

As a new type of delivery strategy, CSCs have been designed to attract high school early leavers, unemployed workers and others who face multiple barriers to participation in institution-based programs and who would benefit from more flexible delivery models. CSCs are essentially community driven and managed by a board of volunteers representing a wide range of community agencies, interest groups and other stakeholders. Given the community-based nature of CSCs, they are intended to evolve according to the particular needs of the community in which they are located and as such, vary in size, scope of programming, types of partnerships and the range of their activities. The primary objectives of the CSC/SI include the following:

1. to act as a focal point for bringing together community resources to increase access to training and to provide a bridge between training and work;
2. to increase community input and decision-making regarding training and adjustment issues;
3. to increase competitiveness of business and industry in the global marketplace and individuals in the labour market through the use of information technology;
4. to achieve financial independence from government funding of operational costs.

In essence, the CSC/SI objectives aim to add value to community educational opportunities by:

- providing innovative, flexible delivery of needed courses and programs;
- using technology as a tool to enhance access to education and training resources not currently available in the community and to promote propagation of technology in the community;
- being a focal point for bringing community resources together to reduce duplication of programs and services, to enhance the quality of training programs through partnerships and to promote new training opportunities leading to skills upgrading, improved employability skills or self-development.

1.2 Purpose of the Research

In September, 1998, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) commissioned R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. to undertake the *Community Skills Centre (CSC) Follow-up Survey* project.

The purpose of the project was to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of the B.C. Community Skills Centre Strategic Initiative in facilitating labour market adjustment in selected communities through the completion of a follow-up telephone survey of CSC training participants and a comparison sample of non-CSC users.[1]

As part of the overall assessment of the effectiveness of the Centres, the *Community Skills Centre (CSC) Follow-up Survey* represented the second of two projects to identify the impact of the CSC/SI from a program participant perspective.

The first project, the *Community Skills Centre Baseline Survey* project, consisted of the collection of information from a sample of CSC training participants (to determine participant status prior to participation in a CSC program) as well as from a representative comparison population.[2] The comparison sample was demographically matched to a particular sub-group of the CSC training participant sample. This sub-group, referred to in this report as the target group, was defined as those CSC training participants who were relying on income assistance or employment insurance as their primary source of income just prior to taking their CSC training. The purpose of the baseline survey project was to provide a "snapshot" or profile of all CSC training participants, CSC target participants and comparison respondents with respect to attitudes about their employment prospects, training outcomes, and labour force participation as of the period from October, 1997 to February, 1998. For further information regarding the baseline survey project, readers are directed to the *CSC Baseline Survey Project Topline Report*, prepared for HRDC and MAETT in September, 1998.

The second project involved the completion of a follow-up survey–which took place in October, 1998–of all respondents contacted as part of the baseline survey. The purpose of the follow-up survey was to establish the employment and training status of respondents as of October, 1998 and to gather further information with respect to satisfaction with training received and the extent to which their training helped them to achieve their employment and training goals. The information gathered through the follow-up survey has been used in conjunction with the results from the baseline survey to help identify changes in outcomes for the target CSC participant group[3] relative to the comparison population with respect to various employment and training measures. As well, because not all CSC training participants surveyed as a part of the baseline survey were part of the target group, the information from the follow-up survey has also been used to help identify changes in employment status and employability of all CSC training participants.

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[1] As a result of the many programs and services offered by CSCs across the province, there are a variety of different CSC "client groups". For example, many clients access CSCs on a drop-in basis or only utilize services, while other clients participate in training programs. This research focussed only on the "training program" client group and as such, should not be considered reflective of all CSC clients. Readers are directed to Section 2.3.1 of this report for further details regarding the definition of a CSC training program participant for the purposes of this study.

[2] The comparison sample was to consist of individuals receiving income assistance or employment insurance who had not participated in a CSC training program.

[3] The CSC target group includes CSC training participants who identified their primary source of income as either income assistance or employment insurance.

As such, the final results of the *Community Skills Centre Follow-up Survey* project help to provide an overall assessment of the incremental impact of participation in a CSC Program from a participant perspective.

1.3 Report Structure

This report highlights the key results of the *CSC Follow-up Survey* project as they relate to the overall impact of participation in a CSC program from a client perspective. Information contained in this *Summary Report* is presented as follows:

Section 1: Introduction. This section provides a brief overview of the CSC/SI and the purpose of the current research.

Section 2: Research Methodology. This section provides information with respect to the research methodology and research activities undertaken for the follow-up survey.

Section 3: Analysis of Employment and Other Outcomes of all CSC Training Participants. This section describes the results of the analysis of all CSC training participants with respect to further education and training, changes in employment status and other measures of CSC effectiveness.

Section 4: Impact of CSC Participation on Outcomes for IA/EI Participants Relative to the Comparison Sample. The follow-up survey asked respondents to provide information with respect to their employment and training activities at the time of the interview as well as their confidence in finding/keeping employment. This section highlights the analysis of these results and any differences found between the target and comparison populations from the baseline point in time to the follow-up.

Section 5: Key Conclusions: This section provides an overview of the key conclusions that may be drawn from the research findings.

Appendices to this report include the following: the survey instrument; respondent cover letters; statistical tables; and respondent comments to open-ended survey questions.

For additional information, readers may wish to use this report in conjunction with the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report*.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Objectives and Requirements

The purpose of the *Community Skills Centre Follow-up Survey* project was to identify the impact of the Community Skills Centre Strategic Initiative from a program participant perspective. As such, the objectives of the project included the following:

1. to provide a "snapshot" or profile of both CSC respondents and comparison respondents with respect to their employment and training status as of October, 1998;
2. to gather further information with respect to satisfaction with CSC training received and the extent to which training helped participants achieve their employment and training goals;
3. to assess the impact of CSC participation on various education, employment and other outcomes through an analysis of change in employment and education status of respondent from the baseline point in time (e.g., February, 1998) to the follow-up point in time (e.g., October, 1998).

Therefore, the information gathered through the follow-up survey was to be used in conjunction with the results from the baseline survey to help identify changes in outcomes for the following groups:

- all CSC training participants;
- the CSC target group[4] relative to a comparison sample of IA/EI respondents.

As such, the requirements for this project included the following:

1. Review and modification of the baseline survey instrument to accommodate the needs and objectives of the follow-up survey.
2. Design and mail-out of respondent cover letters.
3. Field testing and telephone administration of the follow-up survey to all respondents contacted as a part of the baseline survey (sample size of 1,224).
4. Data analysis and reduction activities and the provision of a Summary Report, appending relevant technical materials related to survey administration.

2.2 Research Instruments

In consultation with the Steering Committee, the Consultant modified the baseline version of the survey instrument and designed the respondent cover letters. For the purpose of conducting comparative analyses, the instrument used for the follow-up survey was highly similar to that used for the baseline survey project. In general, the follow-up survey was designed to gather information with respect to the following issues:

[4] The CSC target group includes CSC training participants who identified their primary source of income as either income assistance or employment insurance.

- details about any further education or training activities undertaken since the completion of the baseline survey;
- current employment status, including details surrounding that status (e.g., occupation, industry, wage, hours worked; or length of time unemployed, reason not employed, etc.);
- perceptions with respect to current and future employment prospects and outcomes as a result of CSC training (or other training for comparison respondents, where applicable) and the importance of CSC in leading respondents to improvements and/or changes in their employment or training outcomes.

A copy of the survey instrument has been included in the *Technical Appendix* to this report, submitted under separate cover. Readers are also directed to the *Technical Appendix* for copies of the respondent cover letters.

2.3 Defining the Sample and Sample Characteristics

2.3.1 Sample Definition

Given that all respondents contacted as part of the baseline survey were included in the frame for the *CSC Follow-up Survey* project, sample selection was not required (all sample selection and sample definition activities were completed as part of the *CSC Baseline Survey* project). However, given that various respondent groups comprise the follow-up survey sample, the following information with respect to how the samples have been defined is provided below, for reader clarification:

CSC Program Participant Sample. CSC program participants were selected for the baseline survey according to the following parameters: attendance of no less than six hours of a minimum twelve hour training program at or through a Community Skills Centre at some point during the period from October to December, 1997.[5]

CSC Target Sample. The CSC target sample is a sub-group of the total CSC respondent group. This group was defined upon the completion of the baseline survey according to the following parameters: in addition to the above, CSC target group respondents indicated that their primary source of income was either IA or EI at the time they began their CSC training.

IA/EI "Comparison" Sample. The IA/EI comparison sample was drawn after the CSC target group had been established. The comparison sample was selected by matching various demographic characteristics (e.g., region, age, gender, etc.) to the CSC target sample in order to ensure the two groups would be similar for the purposes of analytical comparisons. The IA/EI comparison sample was also drawn according to the following parameters: they were receiving either IA or EI at some point during the period from October to December, 1997; and had not taken training through a CSC at any point during that time.

[5] The determined program and participant parameters were determined to be as follows: a program was defined as consisting of no less than 12 hours of instruction; and a training program participant was defined as anyone who had been registered and had completed at least 6 hours of a program.

2.3.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Table 2-1, below highlights the demographic characteristics of the various respondent groups. As highlighted in the Table, the demographic distribution of the comparison sample was highly similar to that of the CSC target group. For example:

- the majority of respondent from both groups (target, 61.3%; comparison, 66.1%) lived in B.C's smaller cities and communities, while just over one-third of respondents (target, 38.7%; comparison, 33.9%) were from larger urban areas;
- respondent age groups were also well distributed: approximately four in ten respondents were between the ages of 31-45 (target, 38.7%; comparison, 40.7%) and approximately three in ten were either 30 years or younger (target, 29.0%; comparison, 29.6%) or over 45 years of age (target, 32.2%; comparison, 27.9%).

Table 2-1
Demographic Distribution of Respondents: Baseline Survey

Characteristic:	All CSC Respondents	CSC Target Group	IA/EI Comparison Group
Gender			
Female	44.9%	43.5%	40.8%
Male	55.1%	56.5%	59.2%
Aboriginal Status:			
Aboriginal	8.3%	7.7%	6.9%
Non-Aboriginal	90.8%	91.9%	93.1%
Region			
Urban	32.4%	38.7%	33.9%
Rural	67.6%	61.3%	66.1%
Age			
Under 30	26.5%	29.0%	29.6%
31-45	45.9%	38.7%	40.7%
Over 45	27.5%	32.2%	27.9%
Marital Status			
Married/common-law	51.5%	36.7%	42.3%
Single	34.1%	44.0%	36.3%
Divorced/Separated/Widow	12.9%	18.2%	20.8%
Dependent Children			
Yes	49.4%	44.8%	44.2%
No	50.0%	55.2%	55.8%
Education			
Less than high school	21.7%	23.0%	35.3%
High school diploma	44.5%	43.5%	40.1%
College/vocational diploma	15.4%	17.7%	15.8%
University degree	17.7%	15.3%	8.8%

n=806 for all CSC respondents, 248 for the target group and 419 for the comparison group
totals may not add to 100% due to non-response.

Overall, with the exception of level of education, the demographic distribution of the target and comparison samples was found to be adequately "matched" or similar.

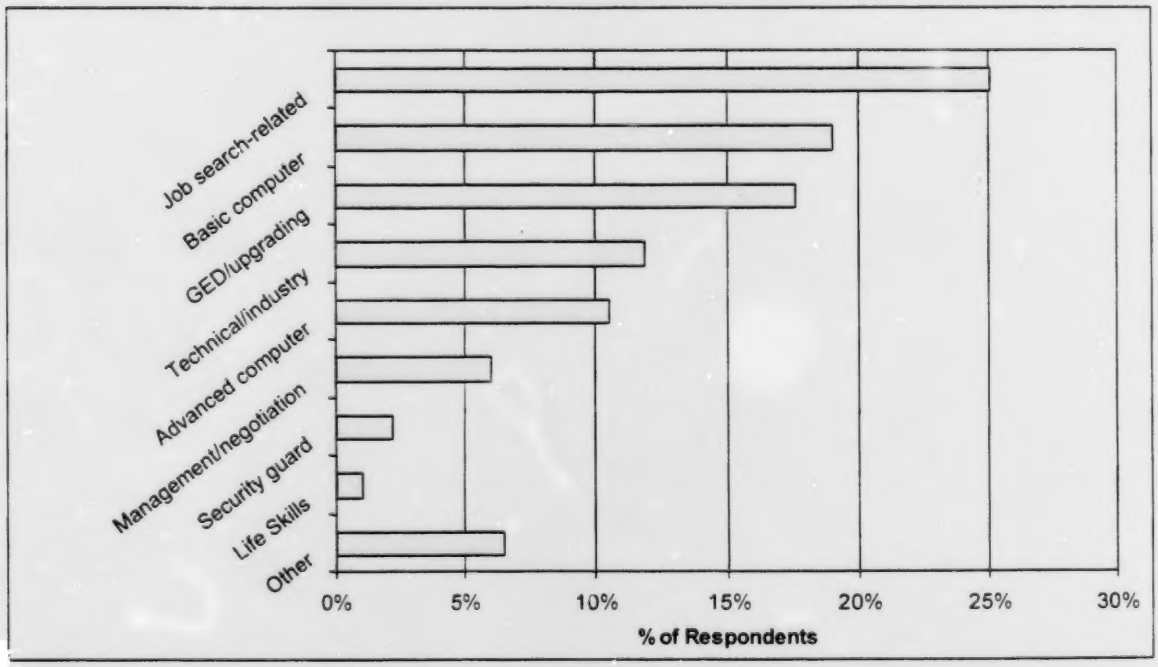
For further information regarding the sampling procedures used during the baseline survey project, initial sample distribution or respondent characteristics, readers are directed to the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report*, submitted in September, 1998.

2.3.3 Training Profile of CSC Respondents

The training profile of CSC training participants (e.g., types of programs taken, duration of training, Centre used, etc.) are detailed in the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report*. For ease of reference, the profile of CSC respondents, as established through the completion of the baseline survey, is also provided below:

- As highlighted in Chart 2-1, the most common type of training taken by respondents was a job search/career assessment-related program, taken by approximately one quarter (25.1%) of CSC participants. About two in ten had taken a basic computer training course (19.1%) or had been involved in a GED/upgrading program (17.6%).

Chart 2-1
Program Taken at or Through a CSC



n=806

- Program duration varied from approximately two days of instruction (the minimum length as per the program definition used for this study) to longer than three months. Just over one-quarter (27.8%) had taken short programs of less than one week in length. About two in ten (18.2%) took programs that were longer than three months. The median program length for all respondents was 15 days.

- Human Resources (26.2%), Employment Insurance (22.0%), and personal savings (17.4%) were the most common sources of funding.[6] Approximately one in ten received funding from FRBC/Ministry of Forests (13.5%) or their employer (11.0%). Other sources of funding (8.1%) included family, First Nations, insurance, bursaries or scholarships. 10.0% of respondents contacted were not sure who provided the funding for their training.

- At the time the baseline interviews were conducted, over half (57.1%) had completed their training program, while 42.3% had not. Of those who completed their training, half (50.2%) reported receiving a certificate or diploma. The main reason for not having completed the program by the time of the interview was that the program was on-going (i.e., of those who had not completed their program, the vast majority (76.0%) indicated that their program was still in progress). Those who reported that their training program was ongoing were asked about their completion status again at the point of the follow-up survey.

- Respondents had various reasons or goals for taking their CSC training program. For example, over one-third (37.3%) reported taking their CSC program to learn new or improve existing job skills. Two in ten (21.0%) reported taking their program in the hopes of getting a job. Approximately one in ten (12.7%) registered in their program in the hopes of obtaining a diploma.

- With respect to the employment status of all CSC training participants just prior to the time they took their CSC training, the following was noted: just under half were employed (45.2%); approximately three in ten were unemployed and relying on either IA or EI (30.8%); one quarter were unemployed and relying on other sources of income (24.1%).

2.4 Survey Administration Activities, Survey Completions and Response Rates

Introductory letters to respondents were mailed during the week of October 26, 1998 and field testing of the survey instrument was completed on October 27, 1998. A total of 54 interviews were completed during the field test. In general, it was found that the new questions flowed well and respondents were not experiencing difficulties with the length of the survey or the wording of the questions. The length of the surveys was estimated to range from approximately seven to twenty minutes. Aside from some minor word adjustments, no major changes were required to the survey instrument.

[6] Respondents were asked to indicate who provided the funding for their training program. Multiple selections were allowed to accommodate joint funding arrangements. As such, totals may exceed 100%.

Many surveyors also noted that respondents generally recalled the previous survey and were happy to participate in the follow-up. No respondents contacted in the field test declined to participate in the survey.

Full survey administration activities began on October 28, 1998 and ended on November 10, 1998. As highlighted in Table 2-2, a total of 841 surveys were completed, representing an overall valid response rate of 78.4%.

A total of 561 surveys were completed with CSC respondents (169 of which comprised the CSC target group) and 280 surveys were completed with comparison respondents.

As further depicted in the Table, response rates were evenly distributed across all respondent groups, ranging from 78.0% (comparison group) to 79.0% (CSC target sample), resulting in the follow-up sample groups to be a close representation of the baseline survey respondents.

The refusal rate was also extremely low, at 5.6% of the valid sample.

Table 2-2
Sample Size, Survey Completions and Response Rates by Respondent Group[7]

Respondent Group	Original Sample	Not-in-service numbers/ other out-of-scope***	Valid sample	Completions	Valid response rate****
CSC sample	806	92	714	561	78.6%
*IA/EI target sample**	*248*	*34*	*214*	*169*	*79.0%*
Other CSC respondents	*558*	*58*	*500*	*392*	*78.4%*
IA/EI comparison sample**	418	59	359	280	78.0%
TOTAL	**1,224**	**151**	**1,073**	**841**	**78.4%**

* defined as CSC participants whose primary source of income was either IA or EI at the time they took their CSC training in October to December, 1997.

** comparison respondents are defined according to the following: they were receiving either IA or EI during the period from October to December, 1997; and had not taken training through a CSC from October to December, 1997.

*** includes not-in-service numbers/could not contact/prolonged illness or travel /moved out of country, etc. The proportion of not-in-service numbers may be suggestive of mobility (e.g., out-of-province mobility).

**** completions / valid sample. Gross response rate (completions / original sample) was 68.7% overall.

[7] For further information on the initial sampling procedures used, which were undertaken during the baseline project, readers are directed to the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report*.

2.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data from the completed surveys was analyzed using a commonly accepted statistical software package (SPSS for Windows). For statistical tables providing the distribution of responses to all questions by respondent group, readers are directed to the *Technical Appendix*. Responses to open-ended questions contained in the telephone survey were coded for the purposes of data analysis. For complete transcriptions of responses to open-ended questions, readers are also directed to the *Technical Appendix*, submitted under separate cover.

Results from the *CSC Follow-up Survey* have been used in conjunction with the results of the *CSC Baseline Survey* in order to assess changes in employment and education outcomes from the baseline point in time (i.e., February, 1998) to the follow-up point in time (i.e., October, 1998). Analysis of the impact of CSC participation on various outcomes has been performed for the following groups:

- all CSC training participants (i. e., overall change, no comparison group);
- CSC target (IA/EI) participants relative to IA/EI comparison respondents.

Where changes in respondents' status over time (i.e., from the baseline point in time to the follow-up point in time) were assessed, tests of statistical significance (e.g., Chi square) were undertaken where appropriate.

Multiple regression and partial correlation analyses were also undertaken for the CSC target and comparison groups. The purpose of completing multivariate analysis was to help further ascertain the incremental impact of CSC participation on various outcomes for IA/EI recipients, including employment, employment income, further education and training and decreased reliance on IA/EI.

Given that the survey was administered to CSC training participants as a census, normal sampling estimates do not apply for results pertaining to all CSC training participants or the CSC target group. For the IA/EI comparison sample, results of the follow-up survey can be considered accurate to a maximum of ±5.9% at the 95% confidence level.

3. ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER OUTCOMES OF CSC TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

This section describes the results of the analysis of **all CSC training participants** with respect to further education and training, changes in employment status and other measures of CSC effectiveness. Results are presented under the following major headings:

3.1 Participant Satisfaction with their CSC Program

3.2 Other CSC Services used by Program Participants

3.3 Employment Outcomes of CSC Participants

3.4 Further Education and Training Activities of CSC Participants

It should be noted that this section, although highlighting the employment and other outcomes of CSC training participants, does not assess the impact of their outcomes relative to a comparison population. As such, these results may be used as an indication of the effectiveness of CSC participation on participant outcomes, but do not necessarily measure the incremental impact of CSC participation.

3.1 Participant Satisfaction with their CSC Program

Although much information was collected during the baseline survey project with respect to training taken by CSC participants and satisfaction with that training, the follow-up survey yielded additional information with respect to the value of the CSC training they received in the fall of 1997.

The vast majority of respondents completed their CSC training program.

Many respondents contacted during the baseline survey indicated that they had not yet completed their CSC training program. As such, the completion status of CSC participants could not be fully ascertained at the baseline point in time. Those respondents who indicated that their training was still on-going at the baseline point in time were asked about their completion status during the follow-up survey. Results are presented below:

- As highlighted in Table 3-1, the vast majority (76.7%) of CSC participants had completed the education or training program they had been registered in during the fall of 1997 by the time the follow-up survey was conducted.

- Approximately 6.2% reported that they did not complete their program because they had found a job. Only 2.2% of CSC participants left prior to completion due to dissatisfaction with their program.

Table 3-1
Completion Status of CSC Training as of October, 1998

Completion Status	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Program completed	569	76.7%
Did not complete/Have not yet completed program	173	23.3%
Left program: personal reasons / inconvenience	*83*	*11.1%*
Left program: got a job	*46*	*6.2%*
Program on-going	*28*	*3.8%*
Left program: program disappointment	*16*	*2.2%*

n=742

For further details regarding the CSC training taken by respondents during the period from October to December, 1997, readers are directed to the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report.*

CSC participants commonly reported the computer training, the delivery of the program and the increase in confidence and/or self-esteem as key benefits of their CSC program.

As part of the follow-up survey, CSC participants were asked to describe in their own words the most valuable aspect of their CSC training program. Most commonly, respondents provided comments relating to the following areas as key benefits of using the CSC:

- the computer training (23.5% of respondents);
- the design and delivery of the program, including the quality of instruction, the flexibility of program and/or the value of the program content (12.3% of respondents);
- that their program increased their self-esteem and/or confidence and provided them with opportunities for self-exploration (11.3%);
- the value of the certificate or license received upon completion of the program (8.2%).

Some examples of respondent comments relating to the value of the CSC are provided below:

> *"The [CSC course] was efficient, short-term and provided exactly the information that was needed. The interaction there helped me to improve my English for business communication."*
>
> *"The CSC was better for me [than other training taken] because I could do the course at my own pace. The flexibility is really good for me."*
>
> *"I liked the way my CSC program was taught with computers. That was a better way for me to learn. The teachers were good."*
>
> *"The CSC course was a prerequisite for the course I wanted to take for the purpose of completing the requirements of the application. The local community college only has*

courses based on enrollment; what I mean is that they would not have run the course because of lack of students and I would have had to wait two years. The CSC allowed me to take my course right now, which allowed me to complete my application requirements sooner for the college I wanted to attend and thereby it allowed me the soonest possible entry."

"There is a demand for this type of training. I was fortunate that they offered it. The most valuable aspect of the program was having the support from my peers.

I thought the program was nice and flexible. I was able to work when I got a job and continue to complete my training."

"It was a good program because it helped me get my grade 12 diploma and you need that to get a job most of the time. Lots of places ask me if I have a high school diploma when I apply for a job and now I can show it to them."

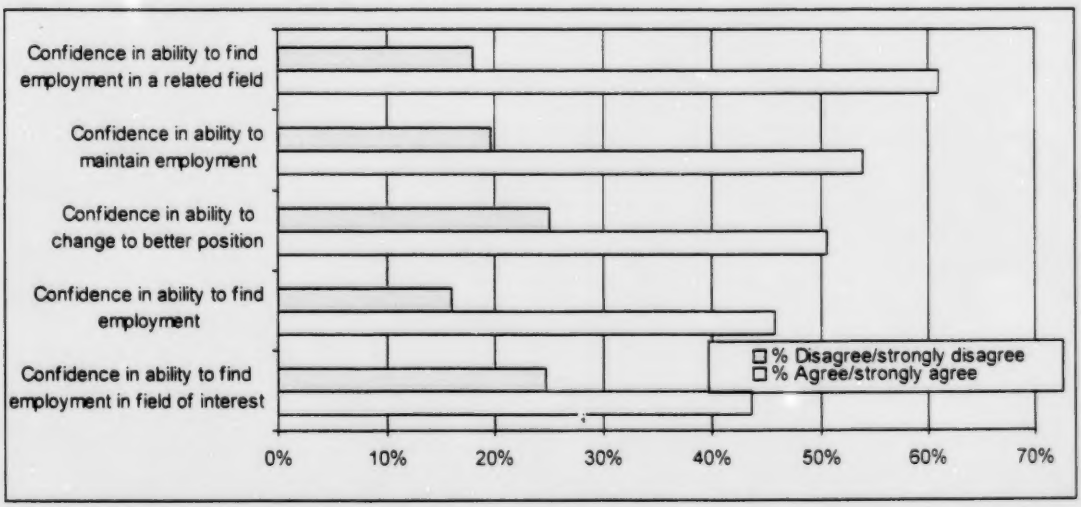
Readers are directed to the *Technical Appendix* for complete verbatim responses.

Most CSC participants felt that their training goal had been met and that their CSC training improved their ability to find employment in a related field, change to a better position, or to maintain employment.

Of those respondents who indicated that they had a goal for taking their CSC training program, the vast majority (79.3%) reported that their training goal had been met. Further, as highlighted in Chart 3-1, Over half of CSC respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that:

- their CSC training had improved their ability to find employment in a related field, if they should want or need to (61.0%);
- their CSC training had improved their ability to maintain employment (53.9%);
- their CSC training had improved their ability to change to a better position at work (50.5%).

Chart 3-1



CSC Respondent Agreement that Training Improved their Ability to Find/Maintain Work
n=199-362

3.2 Other CSC Services Used by Program Participants

CSC training participants were asked whether they had utilized any CSC services in addition to their training program during the period from October to December, 1997, and if so, how satisfied they were with those services.

Most CSC program participants had not utilized the CSC for services other than their training program.

As highlighted in Table 3-2, the vast majority (79.5%) of CSC program participants indicated that they had not accessed other services through the CSC at the time they were taking their training program. Approximately one in ten (10.2%) CSC participants indicated that, in addition to their training program, they had utilized the drop-in/resource centre at the CSC.

Table 3-2
Other CSC Services Accessed by CSC Program Participants

Service	% of respondents*
No additional service accessed	79.5%
Used drop-in centre	10.2%
Used counselling service	5.5%
Used referral service	1.2%
Took other course/used other service	4.5%
Don't know	0.2%

*totals will exceed 100% due to multiple response
n=561

Of those who accessed additional CSC services, the vast majority felt those services were valuable to them.

Of those who had accessed additional services at the CSC (20.3%), over nine in ten (93.0%) reported that these services were somewhat or very valuable to them. Primary reasons as to why the services were valuable to program participants included the following:

- access to the computers and the Internet (31.2%);
- service helped them with their career direction and/or provided access to job postings and resume assistance (21.4%);
- helpful and knowledgeable staff (15.2%).

Readers are directed to the *Technical Appendix* for verbatim responses about the value of additional services accessed by CSC program participants.

3.3 Employment Outcomes of CSC Participants

Results of the *CSC Follow-up Survey* have been used in conjunction with the results of the baseline survey to determine changes in employment status and employment activities of all CSC training participants from the baseline point in time (i.e., February, 1998) to the time of the follow-up survey (i.e., October 1998.)

In this respect, this section highlights the employment outcomes of CSC training participants approximately one year after beginning their CSC training program.[8]

A substantial proportion of CSC participants felt that their employment situation had improved in various ways as a result of their participation in a CSC training program.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they felt their employment situation had improved or changed in any way since the time they began their CSC program. Over four in ten (41.5%) reported that their employment situation was better or different at the time of the follow-up interview than it was from the time they began their CSC program (46.0% reported that their employment situation had not changed and 12.1% reported that it was worse at the time of the follow-up).

Of those who reported that their employment situation had improved (n=233), the most commonly mentioned changes were as follows:

- approximately one-third (32.2%) reported that they had found a job;
- a change in their job and/or their employer (15.0%);
- just over one in ten (12.9%) reported that the hours of work or the permanency of their job had improved.

Approximately 14.2% of respondents reported positive employability changes, such as improved skills, experience and/or education.

Of those who indicated that their employment situation had improved since the time they began their CSC program, the vast majority (75.5%) reported that their CSC program had been either somewhat or very important in helping them to change or better their employment situation.

CSC participants realized positive changes in their employment status from the time they took their training to the time of the follow-up survey.

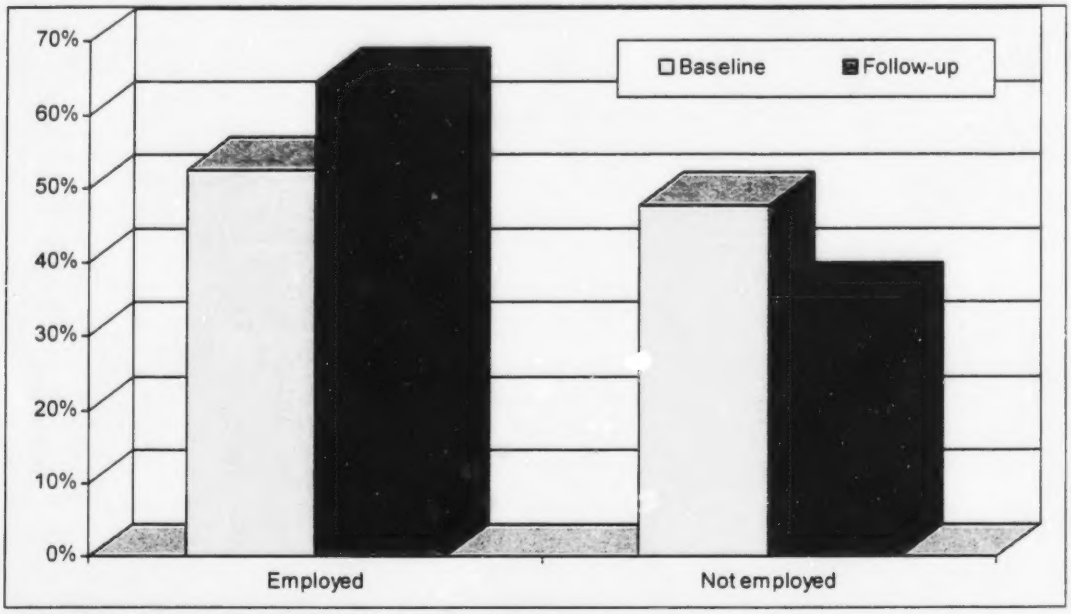
As highlighted in Chart 3-2, substantially more CSC training participants were employed at the time of the follow-up interview than at the time the baseline survey was administered. For example, the following observations were noted:

[8] Although CSC participants had began their training program at some point during the period from October to December, 1997, the baseline point of reference for this analysis refers to the time of the baseline interview, in February, 1998.

- At the baseline point in time (i.e., February, 1998), just over half (52.4%) of CSC training participants indicated that they were employed. At the follow-up point in time, the proportion of CSC participants who were employed had increased to just under two-thirds (64.5%);

- Correspondingly, the proportion of respondents who were not employed decreased from 47.6% to 35.5% from the baseline to the time of the follow-up interview.

Chart 3-2
Change in Employment Status of CSC Participants from Baseline to Follow-up



n=561 for the follow-up survey and 806 for the baseline survey.

Notable increases were observed in the proportion of CSC participants employed in permanent and full-time positions.

In addition to the fact that substantially more CSC training participants were employed at the time of the follow-up survey, improvements in the permanency and average hours worked by CSC participants were also noted. For example, as depicted in Table 3-3, approximately half (51.5%) of CSC participants were employed in permanent positions at the time of the follow-up interview, compared with the baseline proportion of four in ten (41.4%) participants employed in permanent positions. As well, the proportion of CSC participants employed full-time increased from 35.7% to 46.5%.

Table 3-3
Changes in Permanency and Full-time Status of CSC Participants: Baseline to Follow-up

Employment Activity	Baseline	Follow-up	% relative change*
Employed full-time**	35.7%	46.5%	+30.2%
Employed part-time	16.7%	18.0%	+7.8%
Not employed	47.6%	35.5%	-25.4%
Employed in permanent position	41.4%	51.5%	+24.3%
Employed in temporary/seasonal position	10.8%	13.0%	+20.3%
Not employed	47.6%	35.5%	-25.4%

n=561 for the follow-up survey and 806 for the baseline survey
* calculated as follows: 100*(follow-up – baseline / baseline)
** full-time considered to be 30 hours or more per week.

CSC participants who took programs in the areas of computers, life skills training and job search/career assessment had the highest found-work rates.

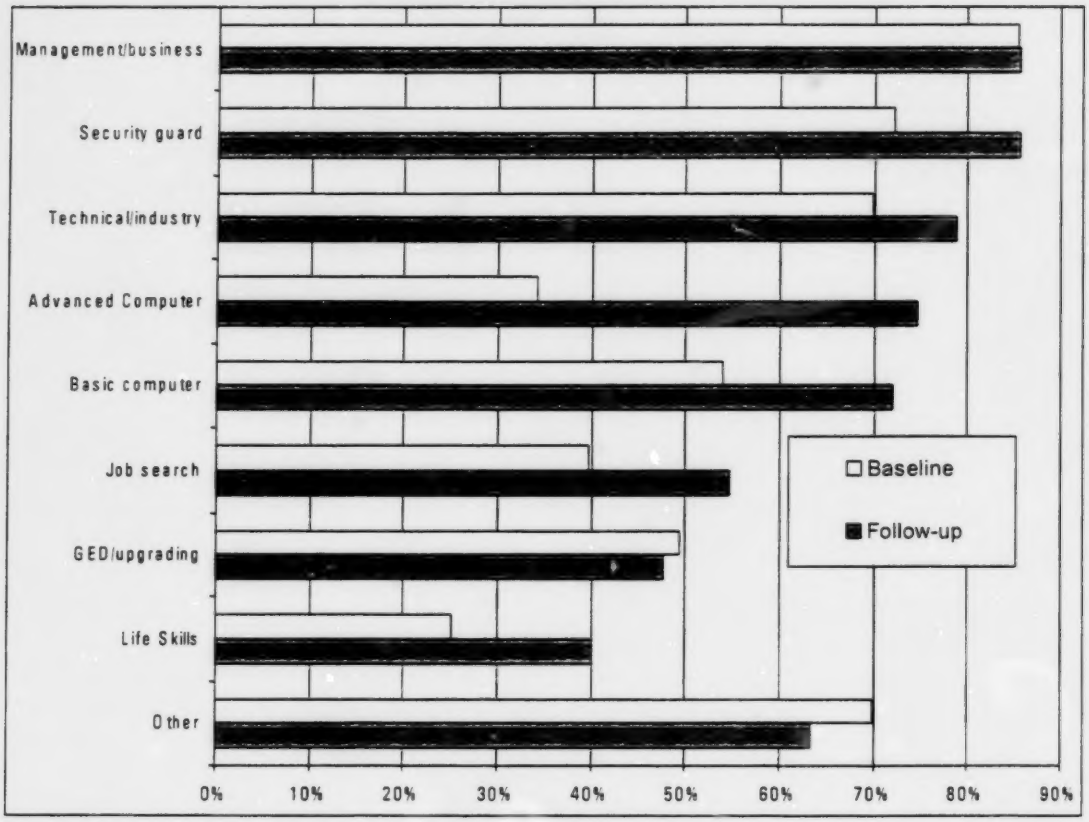
As highlighted in Chart 3-3, a higher proportion of CSC participants from virtually all program areas were employed at the time of the follow-up survey as compared to the baseline point in time.

The most striking increase in found-work rates was seen among program participants who had taken an advanced computer-related training program (e.g., Novell, Microsoft Certificate, etc.). As depicted in the Chart, at the time the baseline survey was completed, just over one-third (34.1%) of participants from this program area indicated that they were employed. As of October, 1998, three-quarters (74.6%) of these participants reported being employed. This represents a relative increase of approximately 118.8%.

Other program areas that resulted in high found-work rates included the following:

- the employment rate of participants from the life skills training area increased from 25.0% to 40.0% from the baseline to the follow-up period, representing a relative increase of 60.0%;
- fewer than four in ten (39.6%) of participants from the job search training/career assessment program area were employed at the baseline point in time, compared with over half (54.7%) at the follow-up survey, representing a relative increase of 38.1%;
- the proportion of employed respondents who had taken basic computer training increased from just over half (53.9%) to over seven in ten (71.9%) from the baseline to the follow-up period (relative percent increase of 33.4%).

Chart 3-3
Proportion of CSC Respondents Employed by Program Type: Baseline vs. Follow-up



total n=561 for the follow-up survey and 806 for the baseline survey

On average, CSC participants realized increases in their annual employment incomes.

As highlighted in Table 3-4, increases were also noted in the average income of employed CSC participants from the baseline point in time to the follow-up. For example, the average annual income of those CSC training participants employed at the time of the baseline interview was $29,579.52. At the follow-up point in time, the annual average income of employed CSC training participants had increased to $31,368.43.

Table 3-4
Change in Annual Employment Income: Baseline to Follow-up

Income	Baseline (February, 1998)	Follow-up (October, 1998)
Less than $20,000	37.2%	31.9%
$20,000 - $29,000	16.3%	17.8%
$30,000 - $39,000	15.8%	19.8%
$40,000 - $49,000	17.9%	15.4%
$50,000 or more	12.8%	15.1%
Average annual income (mean)	**$29,579.52**	**$31,368.43**

n=298 for the follow-up survey and 368 for the baseline survey.

3.4 Further Education and Training of CSC Participants

This section describes any further education and training activities undertaken by participants since their participation in a CSC program. For details with respect to CSC training taken by participants in October – December, 1997, readers are directed to the *CSC Baseline Survey Topline Report*.

Many CSC participants have pursued further education and training activities.

Just under one-third (31.2%) of CSC participants reported having been involved in further training and/or education since their CSC program. Of those, most (68.6%) had been involved in one course since their CSC program, although two in ten (20.0%) had been involved in two programs and 11.4% reported having participated in three or more courses or programs since the time they completed their CSC training. Details about the most recent further education and training activities of CSC participants are provided below.

- Recent courses/programs most commonly taken by respondents included the following:
  - advanced computer training (15.4%);
  - technical/industry-related training (14.9%);
  - basic computer training (14.3%);
  - business/office or management-related training (10.3%).

- Just under one-third of respondents who had taken additional education and training (31.4%) reported that this training was taken at a CSC. Just under three in ten (28.0%) had taken their course/program through a college, while 10.9% reported receiving their training through a private training institution.

- As highlighted in Chart 3-4, respondents most commonly heard about their most recent training program through various forms of media (28.0%) or through the CSC (24.0%).

Table 3-4
Change in Annual Employment Income: Baseline to Follow-up

Income	Baseline (February, 1998)	Follow-up (October, 1998)
Less than $20,000	37.2%	31.9%
$20,000 - $29,000	16.3%	17.8%
$30,000 - $39,000	15.8%	19.8%
$40,000 - $49,000	17.9%	15.4%
$50,000 or more	12.8%	15.1%
Average annual income (mean)	**$29,579.52**	**$31,368.43**

n=298 for the follow-up survey and 368 for the baseline survey.

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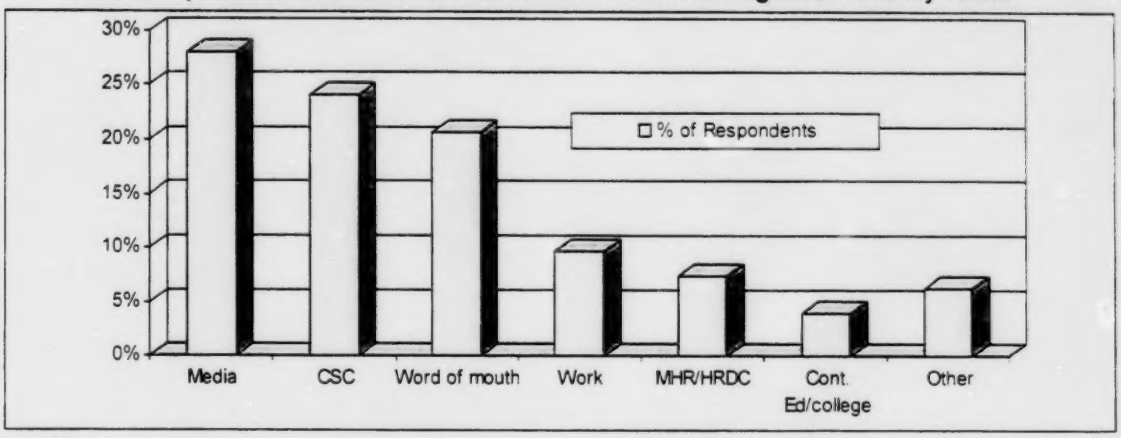
  - advanced computer training (15.4%);
  - technical/industry-related training (14.9%);
  - basic computer training (14.3%);
  - business/office or management-related training (10.3%).

- Just under one-third of respondents who had taken additional education and training (31.4%) reported that this training was taken at a CSC. Just under three in ten (28.0%) had taken their course/program through a college, while 10.9% reported receiving their training through a private training institution.

- As highlighted in Chart 3-4, respondents most commonly heard about their most recent training program through various forms of media (28.0%) or through the CSC (24.0%).

Chart 3-4
Where Respondents Learned of the Further Education/Training Most Recently Taken



n=175

CSC respondents reported positively on the importance of their CSC training in leading them to take additional education and training.

Of those who had taken additional education/training since their CSC program of October – December, 1997, the vast majority (69.2%) indicated that their CSC program was either somewhat or very important in leading them to take further training. The most commonly mentioned reasons for why their CSC training had been important in leading them to further training were as follows:

- CSC course was a prerequisite or recent course was a continuation of CSC program (31.1%);
- CSC program had increased confidence or motivation to continue with further training (20.5%).

Of those who indicated that their CSC program was not important in leading them to their most recent training (28.6%), the majority (76.9%) indicated that their two courses were simply unrelated to one another.

4. IMPACT OF CSC PARTICIPATION ON OUTCOMES FOR IA/EI PARTICIPANTS RELATIVE TO THE COMPARISON SAMPLE

This section describes the results of the analysis for various outcomes of **CSC target respondents relative to comparison respondents**. As described earlier, the CSC target group and the comparison group have been established/defined as follows:

- The CSC target sample is a sub-group of the total CSC respondent group. This group has been defined according to the following parameters: in addition to having taken a training program through a CSC during the period from October to December, 1997, CSC target group respondents indicated that their primary source of income was either IA or EI at the time they began their CSC training.

- The IA/EI comparison sample was drawn after the CSC target group had been established. The comparison sample was selected by matching various demographic characteristics (e.g., region, age, gender, etc.) to the CSC target sample in order to ensure the two groups would be similar for the purposes of analytical comparisons. The IA/EI comparison sample was also drawn according to the following parameters: they were receiving either IA or EI at some point during the period from October to December, 1997; and had not taken training through a CSC at any point during that time.

As such, the CSC target sample includes all CSC training respondents who were dependent on IA or EI at the time they were involved in their CSC program (i.e., October, November or December, 1997) and the comparison sample is a demographically matched sample of IA/EI recipients who had not taken training through a CSC during the period from October to December, 1997.

Given that this section highlights the outcomes of IA/EI-dependent CSC training participants relative to a comparison population, these results may be considered as contributing to an assessment of the incremental impact of CSC participation on IA/EI recipients. Results are presented under the following major heading:

4.1 Employment Outcomes of Target and Comparison Respondents

4.2 Further Education and Training Activities of Target and Comparison Respondents

4.3 Change in IA/EI Status of Target and Comparison Respondents

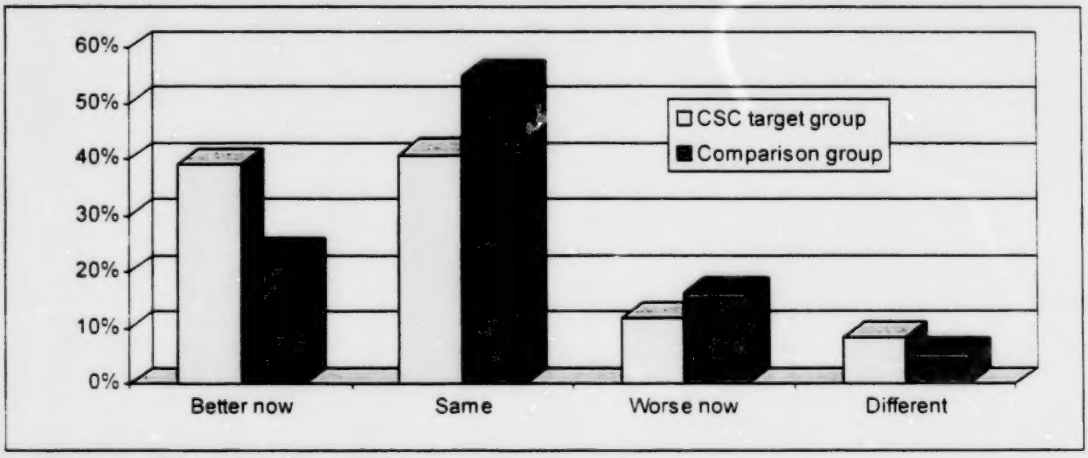
4.1 Employment Outcomes of Target and Comparison Respondents

Results of the *CSC Follow-up Survey* have been used in conjunction with the results of the baseline survey to determine changes in employment status and employment activities of the CSC target group relative to the comparison group of IA/EI non-CSC participants from the baseline point in time (i.e., February, 1998) to the follow-up point in time (i.e., October, 1998).

CSC target respondents were significantly more likely than comparison respondents to feel their employment situation had improved.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt their employment situation had improved or changed in any way since the time of the baseline survey (i.e., February, 1998). As highlighted in Chart 4-1, four in ten (39.1%) CSC target respondents felt that their employment situation had improved since the baseline point in time (February, 1998), compared with fewer than one-quarter (23.2%) of comparison respondents. This difference was found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Chart 4-1
Respondent Perception of Change in Employment Situation from Baseline Point in Time: Target and Comparison Groups only



n=169 for the CSC target group and 280 for the comparison group

Of those who reported that their employment situation had improved, the following differences were noted:

- CSC target respondents were more likely to indicate that their situation had improved because they had found a job (CSC target, 48.8%; comparison, 32.5%) or because they now had more skills, education and/or experience (CSC target, 13.8%; comparison, 2.5%);
- CSC target respondents were less likely than comparison respondents to report that the positive change in their employment situation was related to increased hours/permanency (CSC target, 6.3%; comparison, 21.3%) or an increase in pay (CSC target, 1.3%, comparison, 8.8%).

Of those who indicated that their employment situation had improved, CSC target respondents were also slightly more likely than comparison respondents who had taken other training (outside of the CSC) during the same time frame to report that the training they received was important in helping them to change or better their employment situation.

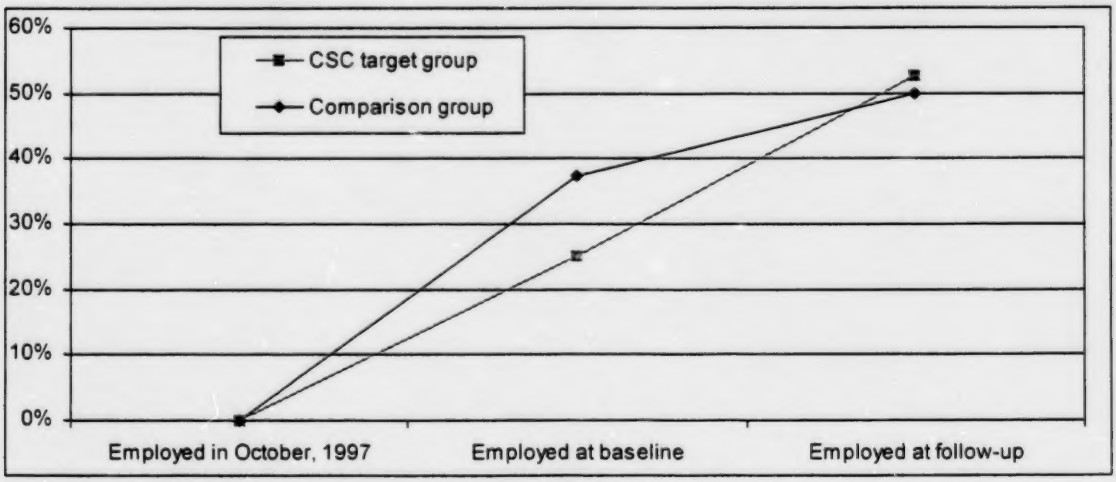
For example, 77.5% of CSC target respondents felt that their CSC training was somewhat or very important in helping them to improve/change their employment situation, compared with 73.7% of comparison respondents. Readers should note, however, that this difference was not found to be statistically significant.[9]

Although similar proportions of CSC target respondents and comparison respondents were employed at the time of the follow-up interview, the CSC target group realized higher increases in found-work rates than the comparison sample.

As highlighted in Chart 4-2, similar proportions of CSC target respondents and comparison respondents were employed at the time of the follow-up survey (target, 52.7%; comparison, 50.0%). However, as also depicted in the Chart, considerably fewer target respondents than comparison respondents were employed at the time the baseline survey was completed (target, 25.0%; comparison, 37.5%). Therefore, analysis of the change in employment status from the baseline to follow-up point in time suggests that the CSC target group has realized a significantly higher increase in found-work rate relative to the comparison group. For example:

- the proportion of CSC target respondents who were employed more than doubled, from 25.0% in February of 1998 to 52.7% in October of 1998;
- comparison respondents, by comparison, realized a relative increase in found-work rates of approximately 33.3%, from 37.5% employed at the baseline point in time to 50.0% employed at the follow-up point in time.

Chart 4-2
Change in Employment Status of Target and Comparison Respondents from Baseline to Follow-up



target sample: n=248 for the baseline survey and 169 for the follow-up survey
comparison sample: n=419 for the baseline survey and 280 for the follow-up survey

[9] This question was applicable to only a small sub-group of comparison sample respondents (n=19).

No significant linear association was found between participation in a CSC and current employment status.

Multivariate regression analysis was undertaken in order to assess the possible impact of the following influences on employment:

- CSC participation;
- IA/EI history (number of months collecting over last two years);
- age;
- region (urban or rural);
- highest level of education completed;
- existence of dependent children;
- gender.

A step-wise entry method was used for the seven independent variables in the regression model. As highlighted in Table 4-1, results of the multiple regression analysis are as follows:

- no significant linear relationship was found between participation in a CSC and employment;
- IA/EI history and age were found to be the main predictors of respondents' current employment status, IA/EI history being the most important.

Table 4-1
Multiple Regression of Seven Independent Variables on Employment

Variables in the Equation	Beta*	T-Statistic***
IA/EI history (months collected over last two years)	-.43	-9.84
Age	-.12	-2.76
Variables not in Equation	**Beta In****	**T-Statistic**
CSC use	.07	1.70
Education level	.06	1.37
Region	-.05	-1.17
Gender	.04	.97
Existence of Dependent Children	.01	.30

n=421

* This is the correlation coefficient or standardized slope. For example, in the case of IA/EI history, the coefficient can be interpreted as follows: for one standard deviation decrease in the collection of IA/EI over the last two years, the move toward employment (where employed =1 and not employed=0) will increase by .43 of a standard deviation.

** Represents the beta value if the variable had met the minimum criteria for inclusion into the equation.

*** T values must be greater than ±1.96 in order to be considered statistically significant.

Thus, employment status of IA/EI respondents can be partially explained through the following equation:

$$y_1 = a + b_1x_{1i} + b_2x_{2i} + b_px_{pi} + e$$

$$\textit{found work} = .957395 + [-.43(\textit{IA/EI history})] + [-.12(\textit{age})] + \textit{error}$$
$$(\textit{constant}) \quad (T=-9.84) \quad (T=-2.76)$$

Multiple R^2 = .20212

Overall, the results of the multiple regression analysis suggest that approximately 20.2%[10] of the variation in employment status can be explained by IA/EI history (the less time spent on IA/EI, the more likely respondents are to have found work) and age (younger respondents are more likely to be employed).

Partial correlation analysis was also undertaken in order to examine the impact of CSC participation on employment while controlling for the effects of various influences, including IA/EI history, age, region, gender, age, and the existence of dependent children. Results suggest that, although statistically significant, only a very weak positive relationship exists between CSC participation and employment (correlation coefficient=.0840[11]; P=.04).

Although not statistically significant, CSC target respondents were slightly less likely to be working full-time but slightly more likely to be employed in permanent positions.

As highlighted in Table 4-2, just under three-quarters (73.0%) of respondents from the CSC target group who were employed at the time of the follow-up interview reported working in permanent positions. By contrast, only six in ten (61.4%) of comparison respondents indicated their main job was a permanent position.

Although more likely to have a permanent job, CSC target respondents were slightly less likely than comparison respondents to indicate that they were working full-time. As depicted in the Table, for example, 61.8% of CSC target respondents reported their main job as a full-time position, compared with 70.7% of comparison respondents.

Correspondingly, when respondents were asked how many hours a week they worked at all their jobs combined (if they had more than one job), 60.7% of CSC target respondents reported working 35 or more hours per week, on average. Slightly more comparison respondents (67.9%) indicated they spent 35 hours or more per week at their job(s).

[10] The strength of the relationship is reflective of an adjusted R square value of .20212.
[11] Coefficient range from 0-1 where 0=no relationship and 1=perfect linearity.

Table 4-2
Permanency and Hours worked for Employed Respondents:
CSC Target vs. Comparison Groups

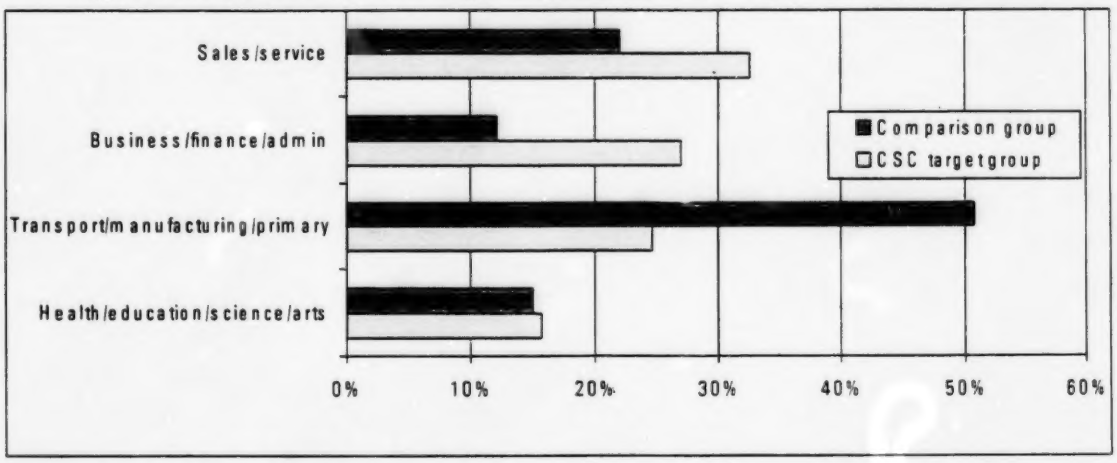
Employment Characteristic	CSC target group	Comparison group
Employed in permanent position	73.0%	61.4%
Employed in temporary/seasonal position	23.6%	37.2%
Don't know	3.4%	1.4%
Employed full-time*	61.8%	70.7%
Employed part-time*	37.1%	28.6%
Don't know/no response	1.1%	0.7%
Work less than 20 hours/week**	14.6%	10.0%
Work 20 – 34 hours per week**	20.2%	17.9%
Work 35 – 50 hours per week**	57.3%	57.9%
Work more than 50 hours per week**	3.4%	10.0%
Don't know/no response	4.5%	4.3%

* for main job, if more than 1 job.
** for all jobs, if more than one job
n=89 for CSC target group and 140 for the comparison group

CSC target respondents were more likely to be employed in tertiary occupations and industries than were comparison respondents.

As highlighted in Chart 4-3, for example, most employed respondents from the comparison group (50.7%) were working in occupations specific to transport, manufacturing or primary industry. By contrast, only one-quarter (24.7%) of the CSC target group was working in these types of occupations. In general, CSC target group respondents were most likely to be working in sales and service occupations (32.6%), or in finance, business and administrative occupations (27.0%).

Chart 4-3
Types of Occupations for CSC Target Respondents and Comparison Respondents



n=89 for the CSC target group and 140 for the comparison group

Analysis of the major industries worked in by target and comparison respondents revealed a similar pattern. For example:

- Over one-half (57.1%) of comparison respondents employed at the time of the follow-up survey were employed in the manufacturing, construction, utilities or primary industries. By contrast, only 35.3% of CSC target respondents were working in these industries.
- Three in ten (30.6%) of respondents in the CSC target group worked in retail/wholesale trade or the accommodation, food and beverage industries, compared with only 16.7% of comparison respondents.
- Two in ten (18.8%) of CSC target respondents and fewer than one in ten (7.2%) of comparison respondents were employed in the finance, insurance, real estate or business and professional service industries.

Overall, CSC target respondents reported lower employment incomes than comparison respondents.

As highlighted in Table 4-3, the average estimated[12] annual employment earnings of CSC target respondents was $23,092.65. This represents an average estimated annual employment income of $11,857.23 less than the income earned by comparison respondents of $34,949.88.

Readers should note, however, that this difference would have been affected by the finding that CSC target respondents were more likely to be working in part-time positions and in tertiary occupations than were comparison respondents.

Table 4-3
Estimated Annual Employment Earnings:
CSC Target Respondents vs. Comparison Respondents

Income	CSC target group	Comparison group
Less than $20,000	47.5%	28.7%
$20,000 - $39,000	37.1%	30.3%
$40,000 or more	12.9%	36.5%
Don't know/no response	2.6%	4.7%
Average annual income	**$23,092.65**	**$34,949.88**

n=78 for the CSC target group and 129 for the comparison group.

Although CSC target respondents reported lower employment earnings than did comparison respondents, results of multivariate regression analysis suggest that CSC participation is not a primary determinant of employment income. Rather, as depicted in the following

[12] Rate of pay and average hours/week worked, as reported by respondents, were used to determine current earnings. For purposes of analysis, current earnings have been annualized.

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[12] Rate of pay and average hours/week worked, as reported by respondents, were used to determine current earnings. For purposes of analysis, current earnings have been annualized.

equation, gender, IA/EI history and region were found to be more significant indicators of income.

$$y_1 = a + b_1x_{1i} + b_2x_{2i} + b_px_{pi} + e$$

employment income = 29646.63 + [-.28(IA/EI history)] +[.39(gender)] +[-.19(region)] + error
(constant) (T=-4.44) (T=6.28) (T=-2.97)

Multiple R^2 = .27659

More specifically, employment incomes tended to be higher among males, those who spent fewer months collecting IA/EI over the last two years, and those who were not living in B.C.'s major urban centres.

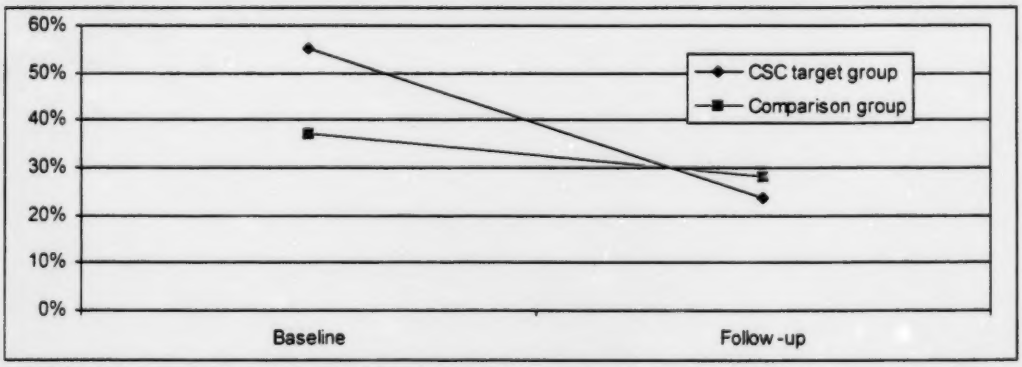
When controlling for other influences (i.e., gender, age, region, IA/EI history, education, etc.) a weak negative relationship was found between CSC participation and income (partial correlation coefficient=-.13[13]; P=.04).

The CSC target group realized a substantially greater reduction in their unemployment rate than did comparison respondents.

In order to determine the proportion of respondents who were considered "unemployed" according to Statistics Canada parameters[14], respondents not working at the time of the interviews were asked if they had actively looked for work in the past four weeks.

As highlighted in Chart 4-4, the CSC target group realized a substantially greater reduction in their unemployment rate than did the comparison group. For example, from the baseline to the follow-up point in time, the proportion of CSC target respondents who were unemployed fell from 55.2% to 23.7%, representing a relative decrease of 57.1%. The comparison group, by contrast, realized a relative decrease of only 23.8% in their unemployment rate.

Chart 4-4
Change in Unemployment Rate from Baseline to Follow-up: CSC target vs. Comparison



n=248 for the baseline target group, 414 for the baseline comparison group, 169 for the target follow-up group and 28 for the comparison follow-up group.

[13] Coefficient range from 0-1 where 0=no relationship and 1=perfect linearity.
[14] In order to be considered unemployed, one must be: not working; and actively looking for work (in the last four weeks).

Of those respondents <u>not employed</u> at the time of the follow-up survey, CSC target respondents were more likely to cite attendance at school as their main reason for not working.

Respondents not employed at the time of the follow-up survey were asked to describe the main reason they were not working. As highlighted in Table 4-4, the most common reason cited by both CSC target and comparison respondent was that they could not find a job (CSC target, 28.8%; IA/EI comparison, 30.0%).

As further depicted in the Table, the second most commonly mentioned reason provided by CSC target respondents was that they were currently attending school (20.0%). (By contrast, only 7.9% of comparison respondents cited this as their reason for not being employed.) Comparison respondents were more likely to indicate family responsibilities or health issues as reasons for not being employed at the time of the follow-up survey.

Table 4-4
Most Commonly Mentioned Reasons for Not Being Employed (Top 4):
CSC Target vs. Comparison

CSC target group	IA/EI comparison group
Cannot find a job (28.8%)	Cannot find a job (30.0%)
Attending school (20.0%)	Family responsibilities (18.6%)
Laid off (11.3%)	Health reasons (12.9%)
Family responsibilities (10.0%)	Laid off (9.3%)

n=80 for the CSC target group and 140 for the comparison group

Although not statistically significant, CSC target respondents were somewhat more likely to be satisfied with their overall current employment situation.

Respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from one to five, the extent to which they agreed that they were satisfied with their current employment situation. Overall, four in ten (41.5%) CSC target respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, compared with just over one-third (35.7%) of comparison respondents who expressed this same view. Readers should note, however, that this difference was not found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

4.2 Further Education and Training Activities of Target and Comparison Respondents

This section describes any further education and training activities undertaken by CSC target and comparison group respondents.

CSC target group respondents were significantly more likely than comparison respondents to have recently participated in additional education and training activities.

As highlighted in Table 4-5, for example, just over one-third (34.9%) of CSC target participants reported having been involved in further training and/or education since their CSC program. By contrast, only 20.4% of comparison respondents indicated that they had been involved in an education or training program since the completion of the baseline survey. This difference was found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Table 4-5
Education and Training Participation Since Completion of Baseline Survey: Target vs. Comparison Respondents

Participated in education/training?	CSC target group	Comparison group
Yes	34.9%	20.4%
No	65.1%	79.6%
Total	100%	100%

n=169 for the target group and 280 for the comparison group

Among those who had pursued (further) education and training activities, some differences were also noted in the types of training received. Specifically, CSC target respondents were most likely to have been involved in computer training programs whereas comparison respondents were most likely to have participated in technical/industry-specific programs. For example:

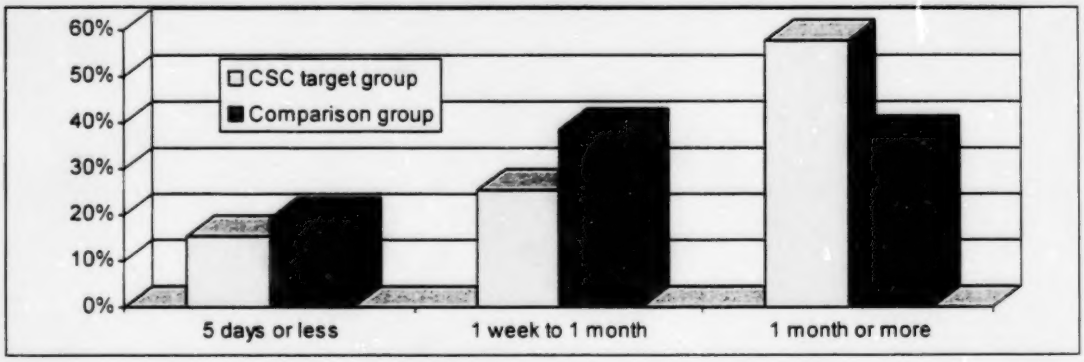
- 22.1% of CSC target respondents who had completed additional training activities reported being involved in either a basic or advanced computer training program. Fewer than one in ten (8.8%) of comparison respondents had taken a program in the area of computers.
- Further, one-quarter (24.6%) of comparison respondents reported that their most recent training program was technical or industry-specific, compared with only 16.9% of CSC target respondents.

Similar proportions of both the target and comparison groups had been involved in GED/upgrading programs (target, 11.9%; comparison, 10.5%), job search/career assessment programs (target, 10.2%; comparison, 12.3%) and various other programs.

Of those who had been involved in training activities since the baseline survey, CSC target respondents were more likely to have been in longer-term programs.

As highlighted in Chart 4-5, for example, over one-half (57.6%) of CSC target respondents who had participated in additional training activities reported that the duration of their program was one month or longer. By contrast, only 36.8% of comparison respondents were involved in training programs of this length.

Chart 4-5
Program Duration for Those Involved in Education and Training since Baseline
Target vs. Comparison



n=59 for the target group and 57 for the comparison group

CSC target respondents were also more likely to report that they had received a diploma or certificate upon completion their program (target, 82.4%; comparison, 62.1%).

Although not statistically significant, CSC target respondents were slightly less likely to report that their previous (CSC) training was important in leading them to take additional training.

CSC target respondents – as well as comparison respondents who had taken training outside of the CSC during the baseline period (e.g., October to December, 1997) – who reported taking additional education or training were asked how important their previous training had been in leading them to take their recent training or education program.

Overall, the vast majority of both groups reported that their previous training (e.g., CSC training for CSC target respondents; other training taken in October to December for comparison respondents) was either somewhat or very important in this respect. Although not statistically significant, comparison respondents were somewhat more likely than CSC target respondents to express this view (CSC target, 69.5%; comparison, 87.5%).[15]

[15] This question was applicable to only a small sub-group of comparison sample respondents (n=24).

A significant linear association was found between participation in a CSC and continued education and training.

Multivariate regression analysis was undertaken in order to assess the possible impact of the following influences on the likelihood of IA/EI respondents to pursue further education and training activities:

- CSC participation;
- IA/EI history (number of months collecting over last two years);
- age;
- region (urban or rural);
- highest level of education completed;
- existence of dependent children;
- gender.

A step-wise entry method was used for the seven independent variables in the regression model. As highlighted in Table 4-6, results of the multiple regression analysis are as follows:

- a significant positive linear relationship was found between participation in a CSC and further education and training;
- respondents' level of formal education was also found to be significant (e.g., respondents who had higher levels of former education were more likely to have pursued education and training activities since the completion of the baseline survey).

Table 4-6
Multiple Regression of Seven Independent Variables on Further Education and Training

Variables in the Equation	Beta*	T-Statistic***
CSC use	.14	2.96
Education level	.12	2.40
Variables not in Equation	**Beta In****	**T-Statistic**
IA/EI history (months collected over last two years)	.07	1.37
Age	-.07	-1.50
Region	.06	1.14
Gender	.08	1.56
Existence of Dependent Children	.02	.36

n=421
* This is the correlation coefficient or standardized slope.
** Represents the beta value if the variable had met the minimum criteria for inclusion into the equation.
*** T values must be greater than ±1.96 in order to be considered statistically significant.

However, it should be noted that, although statistically significant, the strength of this relationship is quite weak: the results suggest that only approximately 3.9%[16] of the variation in continued education and training activities can be explained by CSC participation – where participation in a CSC can be said to be predictive of taking further training – and level of formal education.

Results of partial correlation analysis further support the finding that the CSC intervention has a positive impact on the continuation of education and training. For example, when various possible influences are controlled for – including level of education, IA/EI history (number of months collecting over last two years), age, region (urban or rural), existence of dependent children and gender – participation in a CSC was found to have a positive linear association with taking further education or training (i.e., education or training since the completion of the baseline survey).[17]

4.3 Change in IA/EI Status of Target and Comparison Respondents

Both CSC target and comparison respondents were relying on either IA or EI as their primary source of income at some point during the period from October to December, 1997. This section highlights the extent to which CSC target respondents have decreased their dependency on income support since their participation in a CSC program relative to the comparison group (who had not participated in a training program at or through a CSC).

CSC target respondents were equally as likely as comparison respondents to report relying on either IA or EI as their primary source of current income.

As highlighted in Table 4-7, both CSC target respondents and comparison respondents were equally as likely to indicate their primary source of income as employment income, suggesting that reliance on IA/EI was considerably reduced for both groups since the baseline point in time. One-third of both CSC target respondents (33.2%) and comparison respondents (33.5%) indicated their primary source of current income as IA or EI.

Table 4-7
Primary Source of Current Income: Target Group vs. Comparison Group

Income Source	CSC target group	Comparison group
Employment	49.1%	47.1%
IA/EI	33.2%	33.5%
Family/spouse	8.9%	8.2%
Savings	5.3%	2.9%
Other	3.0%	7.1%
No response	0.6%	1.1%

n=169 for the target group and 280 for the comparison group

[16] The strength of the relationship is reflective of a multiple R square value of .03874.
[17] Partial correlation coefficient=.1365; P=.00.

In all, equal proportions of both the CSC target group (38.5%) and the comparison group (38.2%) reported relying on either IA or EI for at least some of their total income.

For target and comparison group respondents who indicated that they were currently received IA/EI benefits and had also received IA/EI last year at the same time, the CSC target group realized greater reductions in the level of reliance on IA/EI.

Respondents who were receiving IA or EI at the time of the follow-up survey were asked what proportion of their income came from IA/EI and how that proportion compared to the level of benefits they had received the previous year. Results are as follows:

- The proportion of CSC target respondents who indicated that they relied on IA/EI for less than half of their total income increased from 3.6% to 11.1% over the course of the year. By contrast, the proportion of comparison respondents who relied on assistance for less than half of their total income decreased, from 15.0% to 11.4%.
- Correspondingly, the proportion of CSC target respondents who relied on IA/EI for half or more of their total income decreased from 96.4% to 88.9% over the course of the year, whereas for comparison respondents it had increased marginally from 85.0% to 88.6%.

A weak linear association was found between participation in a CSC and reduced dependency on IA/EI.

Multivariate regression analysis was undertaken in order to assess the possible impact of various influences on current IA/EI status (e.g., CSC participation, IA/EI history (number of months collecting over last two years), age, region, highest level of education completed, existence of dependent children and gender).

A step-wise entry method was used for the seven independent variables in the regression model. Overall, IA/EI history was found to be a very strong predictor of current IA/EI status, explaining approximately 41.6% of the variation.[18] In other words, the results of the analysis suggest that those who have spent less time on IA/EI in the last two years were the least likely to be currently receiving either IA or EI. CSC participation was also included in the model, although the relative strength of the relationship was very weak, accounting for less than 1% of the variance in current IA/EI dependency (multiple R^2=.00555).[19] All other variables did not meet the minimum level of significance, and as such, were excluded from the model.

Partial correlation analysis was also undertaken in order to examine the impact of CSC participation on reduced IA/EI dependency while controlling for the effects of various influences, including education, IA/EI history, age, region, gender, age, and the existence of dependent children. Results suggest that, although statistically significant, only a very weak positive relationship exists between CSC participation and reduced dependency on IA/EI (correlation coefficient=.0943[20]; P=.03).

[18] The strength of the relationship is reflective of a multiple R square value of .41619.

[19] For y, where 1=not dependent on IA/EI: IA/EI history, Beta=-.65, T=-17.4; for CSC participation, Beta=.07, T=1.99.

[20] Coefficient range from 0-1 where 0=no relationship and 1=perfect linearity.

5. KEY CONCLUSIONS

This section highlights the key conclusions as derived from the findings of the *Community Skills Centre Follow-up Survey Project.*

Participants perceive CSC programs to be highly valuable.

Analysis of various satisfaction and effectiveness measures indicates a high level of participant agreement with the value of the programs and services offered through B.C.'s Community Skills Centres. For example, among program participants who indicated they had a goal for taking their training program, approximately eight in ten (79.3%) indicated that their training goal had been met. Over half also felt that their CSC training improved their ability to find employment in a related field, to maintain employment and to change to a better position at work.

Further, just over four in ten CSC training participants felt that their employment situation had improved since they took their CSC training and the vast majority (75.5%) of those respondents felt that their CSC training had been important in this respect.

Most program participants interviewed had not utilized the CSC for services other than their training program. Among those who had, however, virtually all (93.0%) reported that these services had been valuable to them.

These results suggests that, overall, Community Skills Centres are perceived by program participants to be valuable in helping them to achieve their training needs and goals and effective in helping them to improve or change their education and/or employment situations.

CSC programs may be valuable stepping stones for participants in pursuing additional education and training.

Approximately one-third (31.2%) of CSC participants have been involved in further education and training activities since taking their CSC training program. Of those who had taken additional training since their CSC program, 69.2% felt their CSC training was important in leading them to take further training.

For the CSC target group, the proportion involved in further education and training (34.9%) was significantly higher than that of the IA/EI comparison group, of whom only 20.4% indicated being involved in education or training activities in 1998. Results of partial correlation and multiple regression analyses further support the finding that Community Skills Centres may be a positive intervention for the continuation of education and training for IA/EI recipients. For example, when various possible demographic influences were controlled for, participation in a CSC was found to have a positive linear association with taking further education or training (partial correlation coefficient=.1365; P=.00).

These results suggest that CSC programs may be valuable stepping stones for participants in pursuing additional education and training and that a positive incremental impact of CSC participation may exist in leading IA/EI recipients to pursue various education and training goals.

CSC programs have yielded positive employment benefits for participants in general.

Analysis of CSC participant outcomes reveals that CSC participants have realized various positive employment and education outcomes since their participation in a CSC program. For example, the proportion of CSC participants who were employed increased by 23.1% from the baseline to the follow-up point in time, from just over one-half (52.4%) to almost two-thirds (64.5%). Average annual employment incomes, as well as the proportion of CSC training participants employed in permanent and full-time positions also increased from the baseline to the follow-up points in time.

Computer training programs have enjoyed particularly positive results.

One of the objectives of Community Skills Centres includes the use of technology to increase competitiveness of business and industry in the global marketplace. The study results suggest that CSCs are effective in this area. For example, while a higher proportion of CSC participants from virtually all program areas were employed at the time of the follow-up survey as compared to the baseline point in time, the most striking increase in found-work rate was seen among program participants who had taken advanced computer training. At the follow-up point in time, three quarters (74.6%) of these participants were employed, up from only 34.1% at the baseline point in time. Those who had taken a basic computer training program also realized strong increases in employment (53.9% employed at the baseline point in time to 71.9% at the follow-up point in time).

In addition, when program participants were asked to describe in their own words the most valuable aspect of their program, a considerable proportion (23.5%) of respondents reported that the computers and/or the computer training received was the key benefit of their CSC training.

The CSC initiative may be effective in reducing unemployment rates among IA/EI recipients.

Analysis of the change in unemployment rates (respondents who were not working and actively looking for work) among CSC target and comparison respondents from the baseline to the follow-up point in time revealed that the CSC target group realized a substantially greater reduction in their unemployment rate than did the comparison group. For example, from the baseline to the follow-up point in time, the proportion of CSC target respondents who were unemployed fell from 55.2% to 23.7%, representing a relative decrease of 57.1%. The comparison group, by contrast, realized a relative decrease of only 23.8% in their unemployment rate.

CSC target respondents are securing employment in a wider variety of occupational and industry sectors than are comparison respondents.

Results indicated that most employed respondents from the IA/EI comparison group who were employed at the time of the follow-up interview were working in occupations specific to transport, manufacturing or primary industry (50.7%). By contrast, only one-quarter (24.7%) of the CSC target group was working in these types of occupations.

In general, CSC target group respondents were most likely to be working in sales and service occupations (32.6%), or in finance, business and administrative occupations (27.0%). Analysis of the major industries worked in by target and comparison respondents revealed a similar pattern, suggesting that CSC programs may be effective in helping IA/EI recipients prepare for jobs in tertiary occupations and industries.

In as much as CSC target participants appear to be establishing positive trends in terms of their employability outcomes relative to comparison respondents, a longer-term assessment of outcomes may be worthwhile to more concretely determine the relative effectiveness of the CSC/SI for IA/EI clients.

For the purposes of this study, improvement in employability for IA/EI recipients was assessed according to various measures including found-work rates, employment income, further education and training, and reduced dependency on IA/EI. Overall, the findings suggest that, although their employment and IA/EI outcomes are similar, CSC target participants have realized more positive tendencies or trends in their employability relative to comparison respondents.

On one hand, for example, results indicate that the overall proportion of CSC target and IA/EI comparison respondents currently employed is similar, as is the proportion who are relying on IA/EI as their primary source of income. As well, results of multivariate analysis suggest that there is little to no significant linear association between CSC participation and reduced dependency on IA/EI or found work as of the follow-up point in time. Employment incomes of CSC target respondents were also found to be considerably lower than the employment earnings of comparison respondents. In this respect, these results point to the possibility that there may be little incremental impact of CSC participation on employment or reduced dependency on IA/EI.

On the other hand, however, the CSC target group has realized a substantially higher increase in their found-work rate relative to the comparison group. For example, over half (52.7%) of CSC target respondents were employed at the time of the follow-up interview, up from 25.0% at the baseline point in time (comparison respondents realized a 33.3% relative increase in found-work rate, from 37.5% employed at the baseline survey to 50.0% employed at the follow-up point in time).

As well, CSC target respondents are considerably more likely than comparison respondents to have been involved in education or training since the baseline point in time. In keeping with this, results of multivariate analyses suggests that there is a significant linear association between participation in a CSC and the pursuit of further education and training activities, indicating that the CSC/SI may be a positive intervention in this respect.

Other positive findings relating to the employability of the CSC target group relative to the comparison group include the following: *i)* among those CSC target and comparison respondents not employed at the time of the follow-up survey, target respondents were considerably more likely than comparison respondents to report that their main reason for not being employed was because they were involved in education and/or training activities (CSC target, 20.0%; comparison, 7.9%); *ii)* as mentioned above, the CSC target group has realized a substantially higher reduction in their unemployment rate relative to the comparison group.

Given that CSC target respondents have been more likely than comparison respondents to be continuing on with education and training activities, and appear to be branching out into more tertiary occupational and industry sectors (e.g., sales and service, business and administration, etc.), their employment levels and wages should continue to increase in subsequent years.

In this respect, analysis of administrative records and additional "outcomes" research would be beneficial in order to determine the extent to which the positive trends (such as increases in found-work rates, benefits of continued education and training, movement into tertiary industries and occupations, etc.) characteristic of the CSC target group relative to the comparison group continue over time and ultimately improve employment status, employment incomes and reduced reliance on IA/EI. In other words, a longer-term evaluation framework may be necessary in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the overall incremental impact of CSC participation in terms of changes in various employability measures and employment outcomes.